

REMARKS

Claims 1, 10-28 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 10 and 23-28 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer in view of the election/restriction requirement. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the features of claim 10. No new matter is added by this amendment, and this amendment is supported fully by the specification. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter the foregoing amendment and reconsider the patent application in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendment: places the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout the prosecution); (c) satisfies a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) does not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) places the application in better form for appeal should an appeal be necessary. The amendment is necessary and was not earlier presented because it is made in response to arguments raised in the Final Rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action indicates that claim 10 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

By this amendment, claim 1 is amended to include the features of claim 10. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 11-22 are also believed to be in condition for allowance as depending from amended Claim 1. Claims 10 and 23-28 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

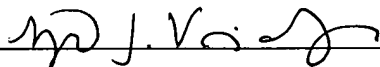
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1349. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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